

7 Gold's Winter Newsletter

May your holidays be merry and bright!
Sincerely,
7 Gold Team Teachers



In English Language Arts



Above are students' "Tell Tale Heart" projects

This month in ELA, we are working on the Short Story unit, one of my favorites of the year! This four week study is composed of 3-4 short stories that are manageable in size and spooky in terms of mood - perfect for the dark days of Winter. Our first story was "The Tell Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe, followed by "The Monkey's Paw" by W.W. Jacobs, "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant, and finally we will close with "Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl. The driving exploration of this unit is how mood, foreshadowing, and suspense are developed in a text, as compared to a visual version. We will study these literary elements as well as the building blocks that create each of them in writing, and then translate this to how these aspects are conveyed on the screen or on stage (through lighting, setting, sound effects, and staging). For each text we read, we will be comparing, evaluating, and analyzing its visual counterpart. Ultimately, the unit will be completed with a performance by the Chamber Repertory theatre, a group based out of Worcester. This group will be presenting most of the stories covered in the unit, as well as a few others. Students will write their final comparison paper in the afternoon following the plays, on December 23rd.

When we come back from vacation, students will experiment with the above literary elements in some creative/short story writing of their own! Following that, we will be circling back to Poetry!

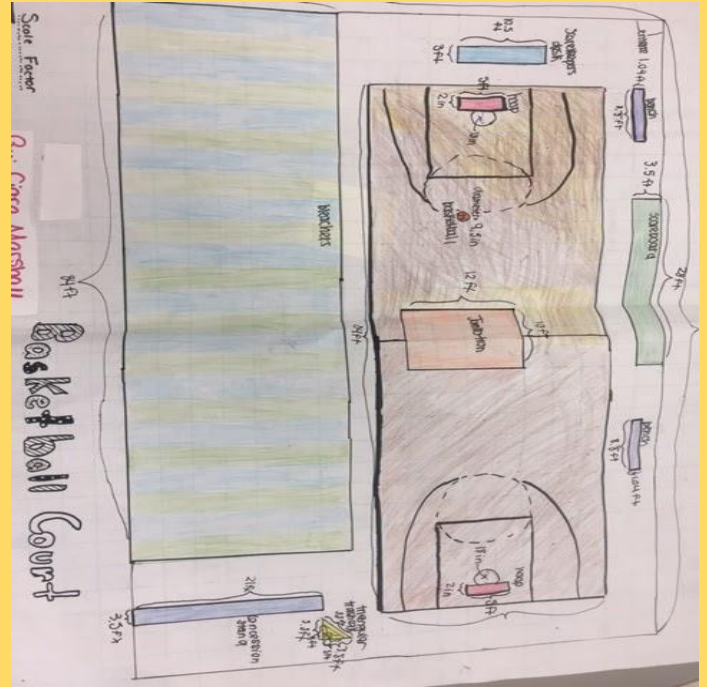
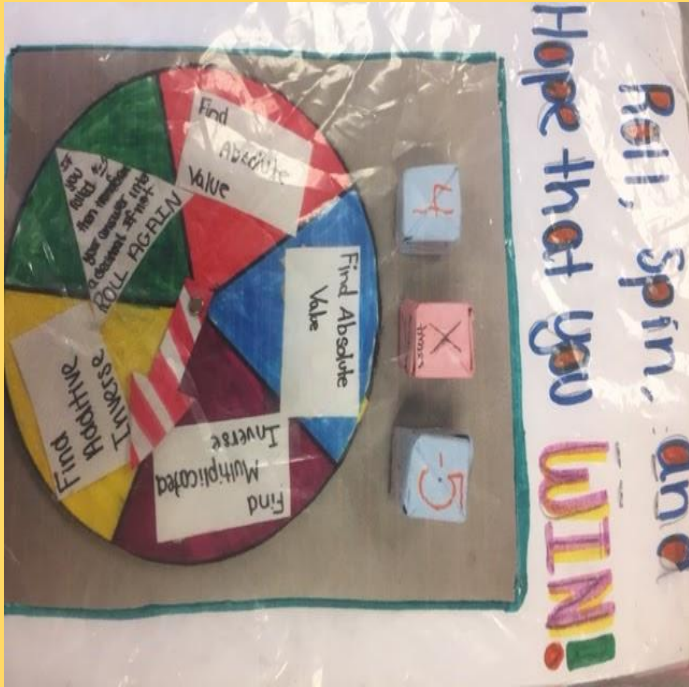
In Science



In Science, we have been very busy practicing science skills and learning about interesting Life Science topics. We established definitions for what it means to be living, non-living and dead. One of the criteria to be considered living is that you need to be made of at least one cell. We then studied what a cell is, and some of the important structures that make up cells. The students made analogy posters comparing different parts of a cell to different items you might find in a restaurant, for example. Those structures inside of cells are called organelles, and they are very important to living things. Cells are what humans are composed of, so we investigated three systems in the human body, how they link to cells, and how they link to producing energy, so we can function.

We are currently studying and using microscopes in science. Microscopes provide an opportunity to examine very small items at a close range. We will also be using an app. called Moticonnect ; this allows a group of students to see the same image that is under the microscope on their i-Pads. After the holiday recess we will start our study of Genetics.

In Math

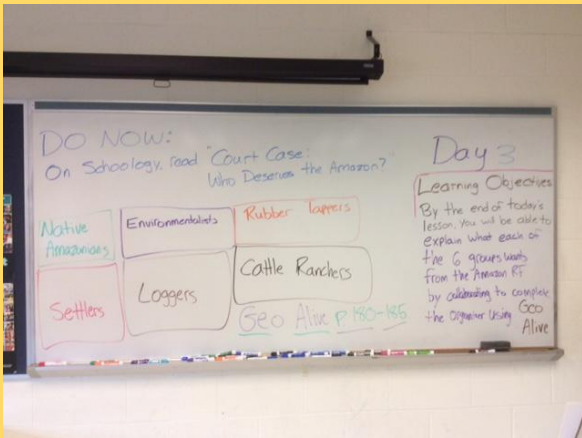


We have been very busy in Math class learning about positive and negative numbers, and designing our integer board games. The students did an excellent job collaborating with their groups and creating their games. The games are not only unique and creative, but are also a great practice to learn about the concepts of integers.

After the games, we moved on to learn about scale factor. The scale factor is the number that helps us to stretch or shrink an object. As part of our project-based learning experience, the students were given a rental property and asked to design a scale drawing for a business they want to open in that property. The goal was to learn to shrink a 100 feet by 62 feet property, and make a bird's-eye view on an easel paper with details of where everything will go, starting from the doors and windows to the furniture needed for their business. The groups came up with different ideas for their businesses. We had a barber shop, a grocery store, restaurants, bakery, flyzone, basketball court and many more creative ideas. The students enjoyed working on this project.

We are starting our new unit "Comparing and Scaling" in which we will be learning about real life applications of ratios, proportions, percents, commissions, profit, sales tax, tips and markups.

In Social Studies

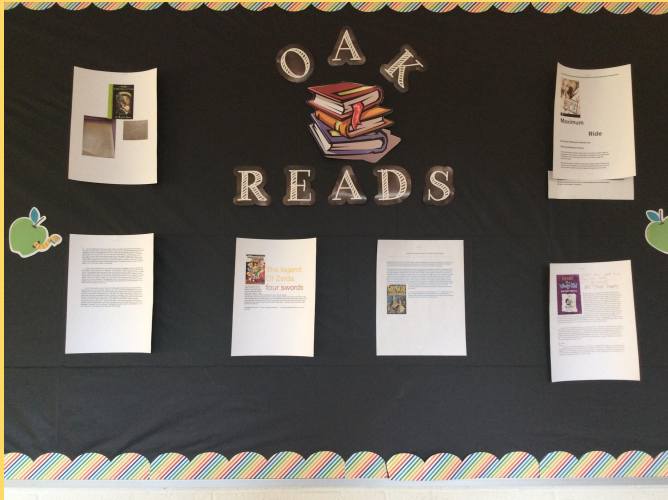


This past month in Social Studies, we have been working on a project-based learning experience on the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas. Students chose a group of native people to focus on. They then engaged in deep research, exploring questions about how their group adapted to their environment, what beliefs and practices they had, and how their culture changed as a result of European colonization. Lastly, students crafted their own lesson plans and taught their classmates about their chosen group. Throughout this project, students wrote journal entries reflecting on their learning and teaching.

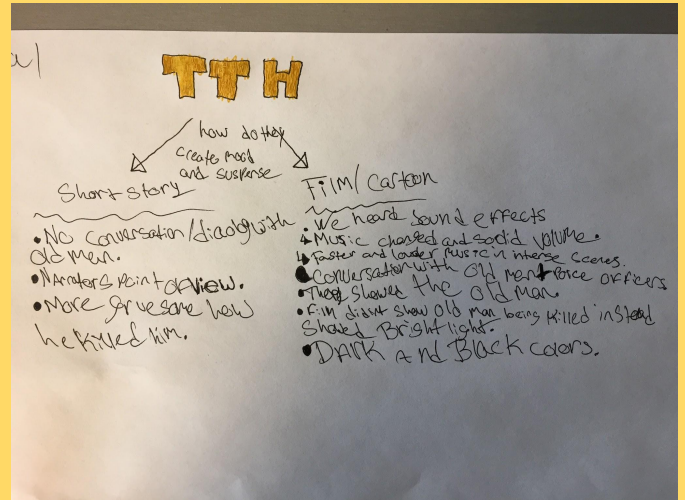
We have also been learning the modern countries of Latin America. Students honed their study skills and demonstrated mastery of the political geography of Central and South America. Our next region of focus, beginning in January, will be Africa!

Lastly, we have been reflecting on the current events videos that we created in Trimester 1. With an eye toward improving the quality of our news broadcasts, students have chosen new topics, discussed what we can do better this time around, and participated in advanced tutorials on video creation.

In Essential Skills ELA

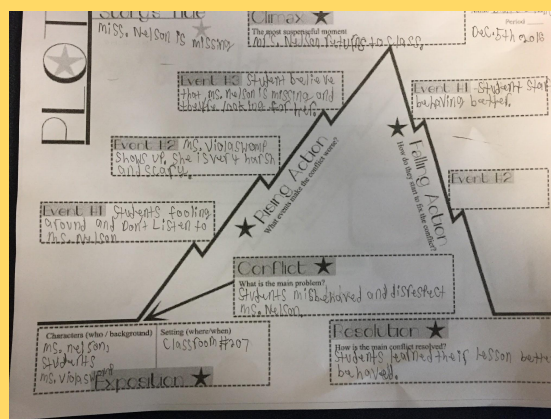


Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) Projects



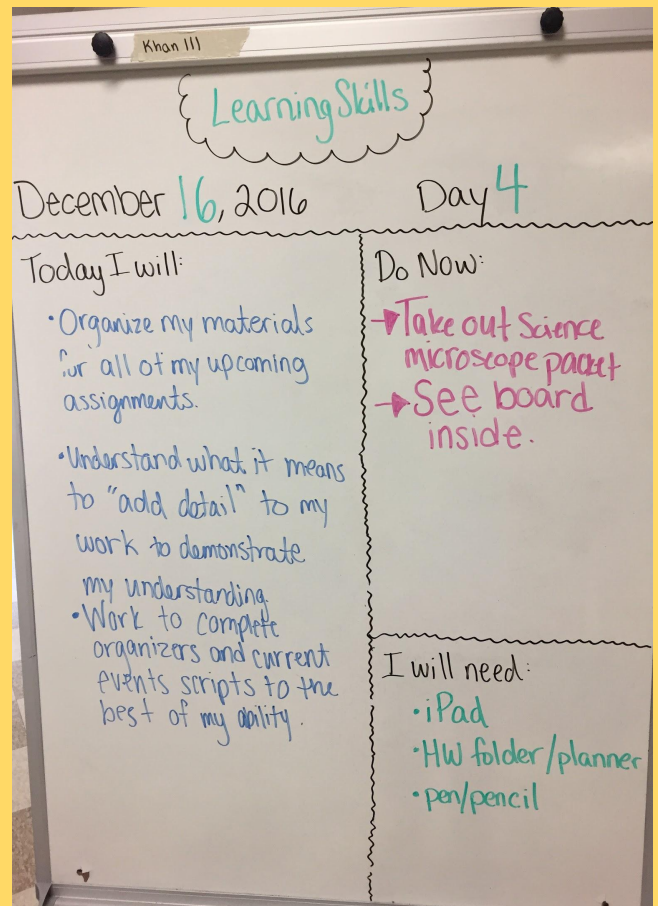
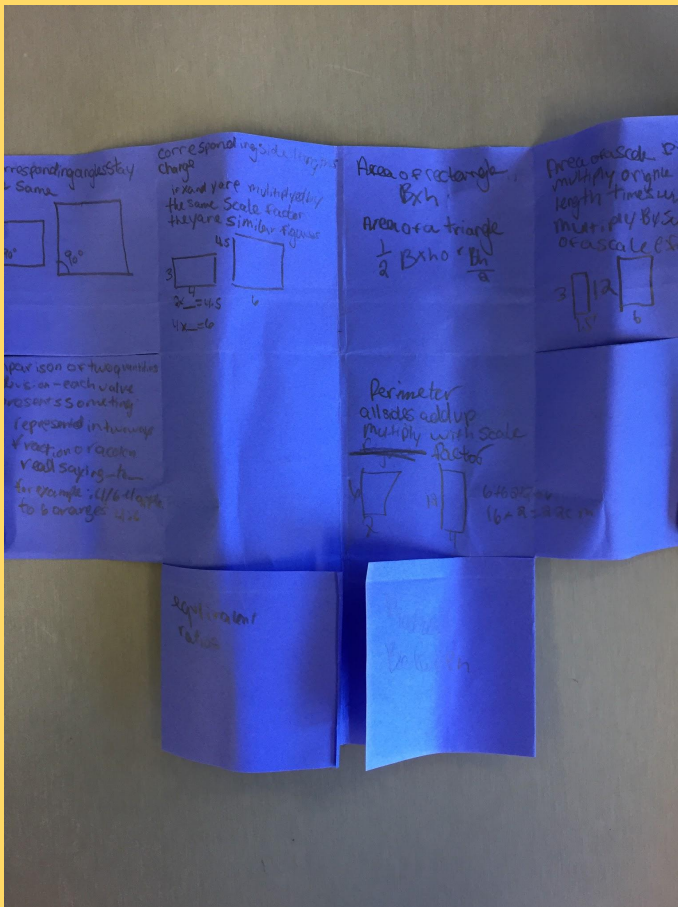
Notes comparing the short story and cartoon of “The Tell Tale Heart”

To start Trimester 2, we will begin our short story unit. Students will learn about the elements of fiction and how they help create mood and suspense in a story. We begin the unit by watching short Pixar films to practice identifying these elements. Two of the short stories we read are “The Tell Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe and “The Monkey’s Paw” by W.W. Jacobs. After reading the stories, we will watch films and compare the two mediums. Students will look for the similarities and differences between the short stories and films and how they create mood and suspense. We will do an ORQ comparing “The Tell Tale Heart” short story with the cartoon. After we read “The Monkey’s Paw”, students will do a movie poster project to show the mood of the short story. At the end of the unit on December 23rd., we will be watching plays based on these short stories which will be performed by a local theater group.



Learning Skills

In Learning Skills, we have been working on improving the quality of our work. Students have been taking a deeper look at the projects and assignments they are working on in other subjects, such as science and social studies, and what they can add to make their work more thorough. For example, on a recent science lab using the microscope, students were expected to add details to their observations. In Skills, we talked about what it means to “add detail” to our work to show understanding. Together we compiled a list of what quality work looks like, and then went back to the lab to ensure that we had done our job. This exercise was very helpful to students. For every assignment, we do small exercises such as this to build student skills and habits. Throughout the year, we will continue to learn more ways of becoming stronger and successful students.



Other 7 Gold Updates

Upcoming Dates:

- Friday, 12/23 will be our first dress-up spirit day - “Formal Friday”
- Friday, 12/23 Chamber Repertory Theatre performance
- Saturday, 12/24- Monday, 1/ 2 Winter Vacation
- Tuesday, 1/3 Classes resume

Hello 7 Gold families,

This is a quick reminder that 7 Gold Display Day will take place on Tuesday, 12/20, from 1:15-2:15. Beginning at 1, parents may begin to arrive; we will be starting rotations promptly at 1:15. When you arrive that afternoon, a 7 Gold student will help you sign-in on our Google form. Please also check in with the front office when you get here. Following that, you will be guided down to the 7 Gold hallway where you will be able to follow your student through 15 minute rotations. Students will be showing off a few of the products they've created, or the learning experiences they've been diving into in each of their classes thus far.

We will be having a 15 minute clean-up time on team afterwards, 2:15-2:30pm. Following that, if you would like to take your child home with you, please let the front office know as you leave.

If you will not be able to attend, we would greatly appreciate if you could send an email/note to your child's homeroom teacher.

Sincerely,

The 7 Gold Team Teachers